

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**May 28, 2008**

*Chair Knox White* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

John Knox White  
Michael Krueger  
Robert McFarland  
Eric Schatmeier  
Srikant Subramaniam  
Neilson Tam

Members Absent:

Robb Ratto

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. April 23, 2008

*Commissioner Krueger* moved approval of the minutes for the April 23, 2008, meeting and minutes as presented. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Absent: *Commissioner Ratto*.

3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

There were none.

4. **COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. **Multimodal Circulation Plan**

*Chair Knox White* requested that the Multimodal Circulation Plan be removed from the agenda since it no longer met.

*Staff Khan* noted that would be done.

**b. Pedestrian Plan**

*Chair Knox White* noted that the Pedestrian Plan Task Force had not met since the last meeting.

**c. Bicycle Plan Update Group**

*Staff Bergman* noted that this group would meet June 16, 2008.

**d. Alameda Point Advisory Task Force**

*Chair Knox White* noted that the meeting was to present a report from WRT Solomon regarding the MTC Station Area Planning Grant. The first meeting was in March 2007, and they brought forth a study that determined three development plans, one of which mimicked the PDC accepted by City Council. They also looked at a scenario with higher density than the second plan, which would zero out the net traffic gains from the second plan. He noted that report stated the higher densities would lead to less traffic and more dependence on transit.

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

There were none.

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

**6A. Review and Approval of the Draft Pedestrian Plan.**

*Staff Bergman* presented the staff report, and noted that there had been no changes since the last presentation of this plan. He noted that it had been brought to the other Boards and Commissions, and that it would be brought to City Council.

*Staff Khan* noted that the Pedestrian Plan would be brought to City Council for acceptance in early July 2008, following the recommendations from the Transportation Commission and the Planning Board. It would not be adopted by the City Council until the Transportation Master Plan policies completed the CEQA process, which would be in the September/October timeframe.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the report detailed the high-, medium- and low-priority projects, and that the report would support future grant applications, as well as guide the Capital Improvement Program in future years. The policies would be adopted as part of the Transportation Master Plan, which would then be rolled into the General Plan.

*Chair Knox White* noted that there had been an issue about the maps, which showed a street and pedestrian walkway, which went through somebody's house. *Staff Khan* noted that had been corrected.

### **Open public hearing.**

Ms. Ani Dimusheva believed the Pedestrian Plan was a very impressive document. She had noticed the phrase “put more distance between the car and the pedestrian,” particularly with respect to bulbouts. She believed that bulbouts were necessary in some places in Alameda, but she did not feel in danger when on the sidewalk. She did not believe that bulbouts improved her safety when she crossed the street, but as a driver, she believed that bulbouts were distracting to her and made things more difficult when turning. She believed that flashing crosswalks were a distraction, and did not flash predictably when a pedestrian was in the crosswalk. She believed that drivers responded to lights rather than people, and that the flashing lights took her attention away from the pedestrians in the street. She believed at the Island/Doolittle intersection, the walk from the east side of the golf course was pedestrian-unfriendly unless they jaywalked; a pedestrian could not cross to the east without going down to Island. She believed that an improvement was necessary there. She believed that the trails behind Bayview were beautiful and should be left as is, and did not want them to be paved.

### **Close public hearing.**

*Chair Knox White* noted that he had some concern about approving the Plan without the Transportation Commission seeing the final version, that the document that would go to City Council for approval had not yet been printed, and that the current document had an incorrect map in it.

*Staff Khan* noted that the approval could be conditioned that the changes would be made.

*Chair Knox White* noted that some issues that trod the line between policy and design guidelines, such as not putting up “no-crossing” signs at bus stops, such as on Atlantic Avenue. He believed that was a policy, and should be in the policy document. He was surprised to find that the design guidelines, originally intended as a companion document, would not be ready to go to City Council at the same time. He noted that would be his preference, which showed buy-in from the City’s policy-makers.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired about the Island/Doolittle intersection, and noted that there was no sign stating “no crossing,” but that there was no crosswalk, and almost no sidewalk.

*Staff Khan* noted that the signal operations were an issue, and that there may be a conflict with pedestrian crossing. He noted that intersection could be added to be addressed in the plan.

*Commissioner Krueger* suggested that a second category be created, where intersections simply had no facilities, such as Island/Doolittle, where pedestrian facilities were not in place, rather than pedestrian crossings being prohibited.

*Chair Knox White* noted that this plan was not the appropriate vehicle to pick and choose specific actions, and that he would like to have a discussion about the valid use of the in-pavement lights.

He believed they were flashy, and seemed as if they would work well; he noted that the current body of work did not support that the \$50-75,000 cost would do a proportionately better job than a yellow pedestrian-caution sign in the middle of the street.

*Staff Khan* noted that staff would prepare a presentation by July to address lighted crosswalks as part of the design guidelines. He understood that they were feasible and effective in some locations, such as Walnut Creek or San Leandro, generally when visibility was good with no sun glare issue, such as on Otis Drive. He suggested that the orientation of the street be considered when evaluating locations for lighted crosswalks.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether any lower-cost interim solutions could be used for lower priority projects, such as signage at Island and Doolittle. He suggested that a sign identifying the last chance to cross the street before getting to the bridge. He added that such a sign could be used near the Posey Tube, and that some sidewalks go to the Tube and that some sidewalks dead-end.

*Staff Khan* believed that was a very good suggestion, and that this could be implemented as part of the City's existing maintenance budget.

*Commissioner Krueger* shared *Chair Knox White's* concern about approving a document unseen, but trusted that staff would make the appropriate changes as requested.

*Chair Knox White* noted that his comment only regarded the map, which staff stated had been corrected, and that nothing else in the document had been changed.

*Staff Khan* noted that there were other changes, such as placement of punctuation, but that there were no substantive changes.

*Commissioner Krueger* moved to approve the Draft Pedestrian Plan. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion.

*Chair Knox White* requested that *Commissioner Krueger* amend his motion to state that staff should look at the Island/Doolittle intersection. He noted that it would be hard to fund everything.

*Commissioner Krueger* suggested that it be tied into the crosswalk lights, and he shared the same concerns about the cost-effectiveness of those lights. He shared the concerns about the crosswalk lights and the associated costs.

*Commissioner Krueger* amended his motion to approve the draft Pedestrian Plan, but with the additional recommendation that the cost-effectiveness of the crossing lights be examined, and to objectively confirm the prioritization of the Island/Doolittle intersection from the standpoint of closing a gap in the pedestrian network, and whether funding could be shifted to accomplish that. *Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that the amendment was acceptable to him, and seconded the amended motion. Motion passed 6-0. Absent: *Commissioner Ratto*.

*Chair Knox White* noted that he would entertain a motion asking that the design guidelines be sent to City Council.

*Commissioner Krueger* moved to direct that the design guidelines be sent to City Council after presentation before the Transportation Commission. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Absent: *Commissioner Ratto*.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the estimated cost of crosswalk lights of \$50-75,000 were generally correct, and wished to clarify that those projects had been funded by grants. City funds comprised between 10-20% of those funds.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether that grant money could be used for other projects. *Staff Bergman* replied that the funding depended on the priorities of the funding agencies, and how they ranked various projects.

*Staff Khan* noted that was a good point, and that in this case, the lighted crosswalks came from Safe Routes to School funding, and that the funding contained that restriction. He added that further discussion could take place in July.

**6B. Review of Multimodal Evaluation Methods to Determine a Project's Potential Impact on Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Modes.**

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report, and noted that there must be an EIR document to identify the impacts and clearly disclose them to the public. He noted that one of the existing significance criteria was the Level of Service D for vehicles at an intersection, which translates to an average delay of 35-55 seconds. Staff had worked with the City Attorney's office and Planning Department staff, and have gotten feedback from them to ensure the report is complete in developing the criteria. He noted that this information would be used to create quantitative methods to evaluate impacts for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit. He described the various methodologies used in the report, particularly in determining future conditions on Webster Street, Park Street and Central Avenue.

*Staff Khan* noted that staff was struggling with how to resolve conflicts, particularly between modes. He noted that in addressing transit impacts, they could add a queue jump lane at an intersection to improve transit service, but at the same time, that would mean the pedestrian crossing time and pedestrian delay would be impacted. He noted that they must choose between two modes for the higher priority. He noted that the City Council has the option not to mitigate significant impacts, if they approve a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and that an EIR must be in place to be able to make that decision. He noted that depending on how significant impacts are defined, even small changes such as striping a bike lane could require a full-blown EIR, which could be very expensive for the City.

Staff hoped that when the street functional classification system was examined as recommended by the Transportation Commission, that classification system could guide the City in resolving some conflicts. Staff hoped to identify the streets by a specific mode and their priorities. He noted that some districts faced similar challenges, such as the commercial districts of Park Street

and Webster Street, where pedestrians were a high priority. Staff requested the Transportation Commission's input in how to resolve these conflicts, as well as continuing the dialogue with the City Attorney's office and the Planning Department to ensure no avenues were missed. Staff suggested that the City move forward with the policy in the Transportation Master Plan, but continue with the criteria development on a slower timeline to allow for additional feedback from the public and the development community.

*Staff Khan* noted that the third approach could be a network approach, which had been used in the environmental community for wetlands. In that case, the impact to one location could be mitigated by similarly improving another location. Staff considered that kind of mitigation, by considering bicycle, pedestrian or transit as a network. If impacts occurred at one location, staff would consider going beyond a certain distance to fix a problem in the network. Staff asked the Transportation Commission to extend the timeline for adoption of these criteria by nine to twelve months. Staff requested feedback on the proposed threshold of LOS D for pedestrians, as well as any suggestion of preference on those issues, as well as how to resolve conflicts based upon the three listed methods.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* inquired how LOS for transit was different than LOS for vehicles. *Staff Khan* explained that the vehicle LOS looks at the whole intersection and all approaches, and that transit LOS looked at the impact on legs with transit. He noted that transit signal priority on some locations would be examined.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Schatmeier* whether delays caused by passengers were taken into account, *Staff Khan* replied that only delays caused by vehicles were examined.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* regarding corridor LOS for vehicles, *Staff Khan* replied they were looking into it, and that the intersection may be improved, but the corridor LOS would go down.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that Table 13 had a typo, and should read "optimized." He added that Table 14 should read "mitigated." He inquired why the mitigated plan numbers for the 2030 TMP for southbound Buena Vista and Lincoln were higher than the number for the 2030 optimized plan. *Staff Khan* replied that the TMP policy was meant to reduce the classification for Buena Vista by shifting traffic onto other streets.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether the model accounted for crossing two legs of an intersection, such as Encinal and Park, *Staff Khan* replied that he would check with Dowling and return with that information.

### **Open public hearing.**

Jay Davis suggested the use of diagonal crosswalks (scramble phase) for streets like Park or Webster Street.

### **Close public hearing.**

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger*, *Staff Khan* noted that the Planning Board wanted to be sure this was as easy and consistent as possible. The possibility of using headways to define major transit corridors was an option, as opposed to the previously discussed option based on having three bus lines in that corridor.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed that the number of routes was not as important than the number of buses traveling the routes. He believed that headway was better than number of lines.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* believed that transit delays were caused by a number of factors, and that speed was caused by a number of factors.

*Chair Knox White* believed that the reason to separate the two was to put in queue jump lanes for the buses to jump around the congestion, and mitigate the LOS for transit without mitigating the LOS for the cars. He did not believe it made sense to put something together to mitigate all the congestion at Atlantic and Webster by adding a couple of lanes, when all the traffic moved quickly to the Tube, only to sit in traffic at that point. He acknowledged that there was no perfect system, and suggested that the Commission may not need to factor in stops.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that he still struggled with the LOS definition, and what it got the City. He agreed that defining LOS for corridors or intersections was a method for defining traffic problems. He noted that transit delay and transit speeds were determined by many factors, and inquired whether it would identify traffic impacts from a particular development.

*Staff Khan* confirmed that was correct, and noted that they came from the policies that the Transportation Commission recommended last year. He noted that they attempted to address degraded travel time on a corridor, which would impact the transit. He noted that this addressed relative change. He noted that the City could examine the intersections on the corridors, or make some of the transit stops more efficient, and that there were many ways to improve service delivery of transit.

*Staff Bergman* noted that as part of the work done by Florida DOT in developing their bicycle LOS and pedestrian LOS, they also did a transit LOS, which was very data-intensive and complex. Staff noted that they attempted to strike a balance in something that the development community could use without going through the very labor intensive exercise that would put a burden on the City to analyze, and would be difficult for the public to understand. Staff wished to show an impact in a way that was easy to quantify.

*Chair Knox White* noted that he especially liked the real-world analysis that shows what pedestrian LOS A, B, C and D look like. He was concerned that LOS D might be too optimistic, and thought that B might be too stringent. He suggested that LOS C might be a level to look at; he noted that most of the intersections operating in the business districts operate at LOS B. He appreciated the Central Avenue bike lanes from Pearl to Oak, shown as operating at LOS B. He

noted that Webster and Park were examples of streets that he would not ride with his children, but did not believe that Webster and Park must come up to LOS B. He suggested looking at two different LOS ratings: one for regional arterial streets, and one for the rest of the streets.

*Commissioner Krueger* echoed *Chair Knox White*'s comments, and understood the desire to have the consistency, one reason why LOS D was proposed for all modes. Rather than change the methodologies, he suggested considering a different significance threshold for bicyclists and for pedestrians. He noted that pedestrians were much more delay-sensitive than drivers, given that they were exposed to the elements.

#### Process for Resolving Conflicts between Modes

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether *Chair Knox White* was suggesting that instead of headways and number of routes, that the City should look at street classifications, *Chair Knox White* confirmed that was the case.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether there was a plan in place to ensure this would be completed within nine to twelve months.

*Staff Khan* noted that three departments were working on this issue, and that the City Attorney's office and the Planning Department must be satisfied. He noted that meetings had taken place among these departments, and they had determined that nine to twelve months was a reasonable time to go back to the public on this issue and discuss it with the development community. Their intention was to complete this in nine months, not to put it off for nine months.

A discussion of the street classification system and its goals ensued.

*Chair Knox White* did not see the network approach as a mitigation of the problems. He suggested returning in June, and that this should be done as part of the EIR. He believed this specific issue of how the functional classification maps interacted with each other should go forward with the final EIR for adoption by the City Council. He suggested that in June, that the Commission return with several scenarios to be prioritized, with the goals of simplicity and being easy to understand.

*Staff Khan* noted that they had discussed how to create a system that did not require discretionary approval for each mitigation. The development community wanted to know what to expect with respect to levels of service and kinds of mitigations to expect before coming into a city.

*Chair Knox White* understood that the concerns were less for very large projects, which would do an EIR anyway; the concerns generally surrounded the much smaller projects.

*Commissioner Krueger* shared the concern about the network approach, and believed that was his least favorite option. He believed that the pedestrian, bicycle, transit and car environments were not so much like wetlands, and that doing a mitigation in another location was not sufficient or effective. He noted that they ran the risk of making one intersection completely impassable for



bikes, and building a beautiful bike path on the other end of town. He noted that he could see positives and negatives with the functional classification and the protected intersection methods. He believed the functional classification might be the most practical choice.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether the Transportation Commission would be comfortable with moving forward using the street functional classification, and whether staff would be comfortable as well.

*Staff Khan* noted that the administrative draft of the schedule would be delivered on June 4, 2008, as promised by Dowling. The delay was due to staff's request to include some of the intersections in Alameda Point that were not included in the regional network. Staff intended to have the administrative draft reviewed, and the draft EIR would be available in July, in preparation to going to City Council in October.

*Chair Knox White* noted that August would be a difficult month due to vacations, and requested that the EIR be released for longer than 40 days. He requested that it be presented after the August meeting. He requested that something be brought back in June. He requested that the maps be explained very clearly in the document.

*Staff Khan* noted that he would talk with the Planning Department and the City Attorney's office to make sure they would be on board with the prioritization. He noted that the policy would be adopted which stated it was a City policy, but the remainder would be held off until the criteria for the nine to twelve month schedule came in. He will talk with the Planning Department and report back in June.

*Chair Knox White* expressed concern that with the number of meetings left, that the discussions may be rushed. He believed that a discussion of the preliminary draft in June would be valuable.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether it would be possible to implement a hybrid approach. He noted that there were some aspects of the protected intersection idea that that he liked, and that he believed they were consistent with the City's stated policy regarding certain intersections where congestion was inevitable. He noted that approach addressed the concern staff expressed about developers wanting to know how they mitigated.

*Chair Knox White* believed that was another layer of confusion in dealing with corridors, when one used the street functional classification, and another was a protected intersection.

*Staff Khan* noted that staff would examine that idea.

No action was taken.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

## **7A. Webster Street Intelligent System/Smart Corridors Project**

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report, and detailed the background and issues of this matter. Staff had been working with Alameda County Congestion Management Agency, AC Transit and the City of Oakland. The City will get some funding from the Transportation Fund for Clean Air, from the air district, and the funding will be distributed by the congestion management agency. He noted that staff was working with AC Transit, and understood that the San Pablo corridor had seen substantial benefit of having the signal priority implemented along the corridor. The signal would detect the bus up to a certain distance, and depending upon the speed and where the bus was, it would extend the green time depending upon the operation at that signal. In addition to benefiting transit riders, it could reduce the overall delay at that intersection for other vehicles.

*Staff Khan* noted that the second element of the project was the signal coordination along the Webster Street corridor. He noted that was taken into account in giving the City funding. He noted that the third element was to provide better monitoring at intersections and at key locations, and also to have better data collection for vehicle speed and volume along the corridor. He noted that the advantage of having the cameras monitoring information available is that it could be available via internet to travelers, such as [www.511.org](http://www.511.org) or the Smart Corridors website. That would also help staff address the concerns of the Webster and Posey Tubes, at the points where backed up traffic would also impact other crossings in the City. He noted that was also a safety concern for the City to have better incident management.

*Staff Khan* noted that the fourth element was to provide this information openly to the public as he described, and that it would give staff the opportunity to make changes as a result of monitoring intersections in real-time. Staff would be able to see such things as lane utilization and saturation flow rates. He noted that Webster Street was a key fire department access route to the medical center in Oakland. He noted that federal earmark money will be available through CMA for this project as well. He anticipated that ground will be broken in July 2008.

*Chair Knox White* noted that bike and pedestrian funding generally came out of grants, as opposed to stable funding, and inquired whether this funding was considered a grant as well. *Staff Khan* replied that it was a grant, based on the population calculation.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether there would be money for installation of displays at bus stops, *Staff Khan* confirmed that there would be funds for displays.

*Chair Knox White* inquired what the City would be getting for \$800,000 that could be spent elsewhere.

*Staff Khan* replied that incident management was critical for the Tubes, and that the Police Department has stated that in the last 10 years, over 4,000 calls had been received related to incidents in the Tubes. He noted that from the time saved in clearing an incident, there would be

a \$6 million savings in increased improvement in productivity costs, and making sure that people get to where they were going. Staff wished to provide better information to travelers, and was very concerned to ensure that motorists were informed before getting in their cars and could choose an alternate route. He noted that this was an unfunded project in CIP.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* hoped that the 51 Line would be a candidate for bus rapid transit throughout its length. If the City had this signal treatment on Webster Street, it might prove itself to be a positive thing.

*Chair Knox White* believed that Caltrans should provide the funds to maintain their own roads, such as the tubes. *Staff Khan* believed that Caltrans may provide some money for this project as well.

No action was taken.

## **8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Broadway/Jackson Update**

*Staff Khan* noted that staff planned to have a presentation made by Dowling and Kimley-Horn at the June 25 Transportation Commission meeting. They will present the results of the models they developed. He noted that the option allowing for a left turn coming out of the Posey Tube is gaining support, and one potential obstacle is that a proposal has been submitted for a development project in that area.

### **Estuary Crossing/Feasibility Study**

*Staff Khan* noted that a second set of public meetings had been held this month. The public has expressed a desire to see timely results. He requested Commission feedback.

### **Monitoring of Oak Street/Central Avenue intersection**

City Council has directed staff to monitor this location based on concern about potentially creating a de facto right turn lane on westbound Central Avenue at the intersection with Oak Street. Staff is continuing to monitor this and will report back to the TC with the results of this monitoring prior to reporting back to Council. A camera used to monitor the construction will be reoriented toward the intersection, and staff will be conducting volume and turning movement counts. *Chair Knox White* expressed an interest in having pedestrian right-of-way violations monitored.

### **Future plans**

*Staff Khan* noted that the Shipways project in Marina Village is expected to come forward for a review shortly.

**WETA legislation update**

Staff will report back once additional information is available. *Chair Knox White* expressed concern that there would be no opportunity for people in Alameda to provide input until after something had been approved.

**Future meeting agenda items**

Items for June include the Broadway/Jackson presentation, schedule for the LOS criteria, and an appeal regarding the installation of street sweeping signs.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**